

Cedar Lake Hostess

Gayle Cook and her late husband, Bill Cook, founded the internationally known Cook Group and became active and highly successful advocates of historic preservation. Their medical equipment manufacturing business began in the spare bedroom of the Cooks' apartment in Bloomington, IN in 1963 and has grown into an international company. In addition, Gayle Cook and her husband have been nationally recognized as leaders in historic preservation. Three of their best known restorations of historic buildings are the West Baden Springs (IN) Hotel; French Lick Springs (IN) Hotel; and the former Central Avenue United Methodist Church in Indianapolis, IN, now the Indiana Landmarks Center. Gayle's passion for historic landmarks can be seen through her two books, *A Guide to Southern Indiana* (with William Cook) and *Monroe County in Focus: Portrait of an Indiana County* (with Diana Hawes and Will Counts).

The Cooks also founded the Monroe County YMCA and sponsored the Star of Indiana Drum and Bugle Corps, and Bill Cook produced the Broadway show *Blast*, which won Tony and Emmy awards.



Gayle was born in Evansville, IN and graduated from Indiana University in 1956 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Fine Arts

In the late 1980s Gayle made national headlines when she was kidnapped by Arthur Curry, an Indianapolis native and Chicago investment broker who had fallen into near financial ruin.

After speaking to a group of Purdue University business students in March 1989, Curry stole a car and drove to the Cooks' home in Monroe County, aware that Bill was among *Fortune* magazine's 400 wealthiest Americans. Curry kidnapped Gayle and bound her hands, legs, mouth and eyes with duct tape, and then called Bill Cook and demanded a ransom of \$1.2 million in cash and \$500,000 in gold.

FBI agents who had tapped Cook's phone apprehended Curry 26 hours later as he made arrangements for the delivery of the ransom money. He was sentenced to 32 years in prison but released in 2001 after serving 12-1/2 years.

Mrs. Cook is graciously opening her private southern Indiana estate, Cedar Farm, for our enjoyment on Saturday afternoon. Mrs. Cook will welcome us and give us an overview and history of the property and an account of the restoration of the home. After we have lunch in the carriage house, she, along with several volunteer docents, will lead tours through the home. We will also have the opportunity to tour the schoolhouse and icehouse, walk to river, and borrow golf carts to ride to the gardens. The carriage house will remain open where we can return and wait for golf cart rides, sit & chat if raining, & go upstairs to see Bill's private Cedar Farm the office.

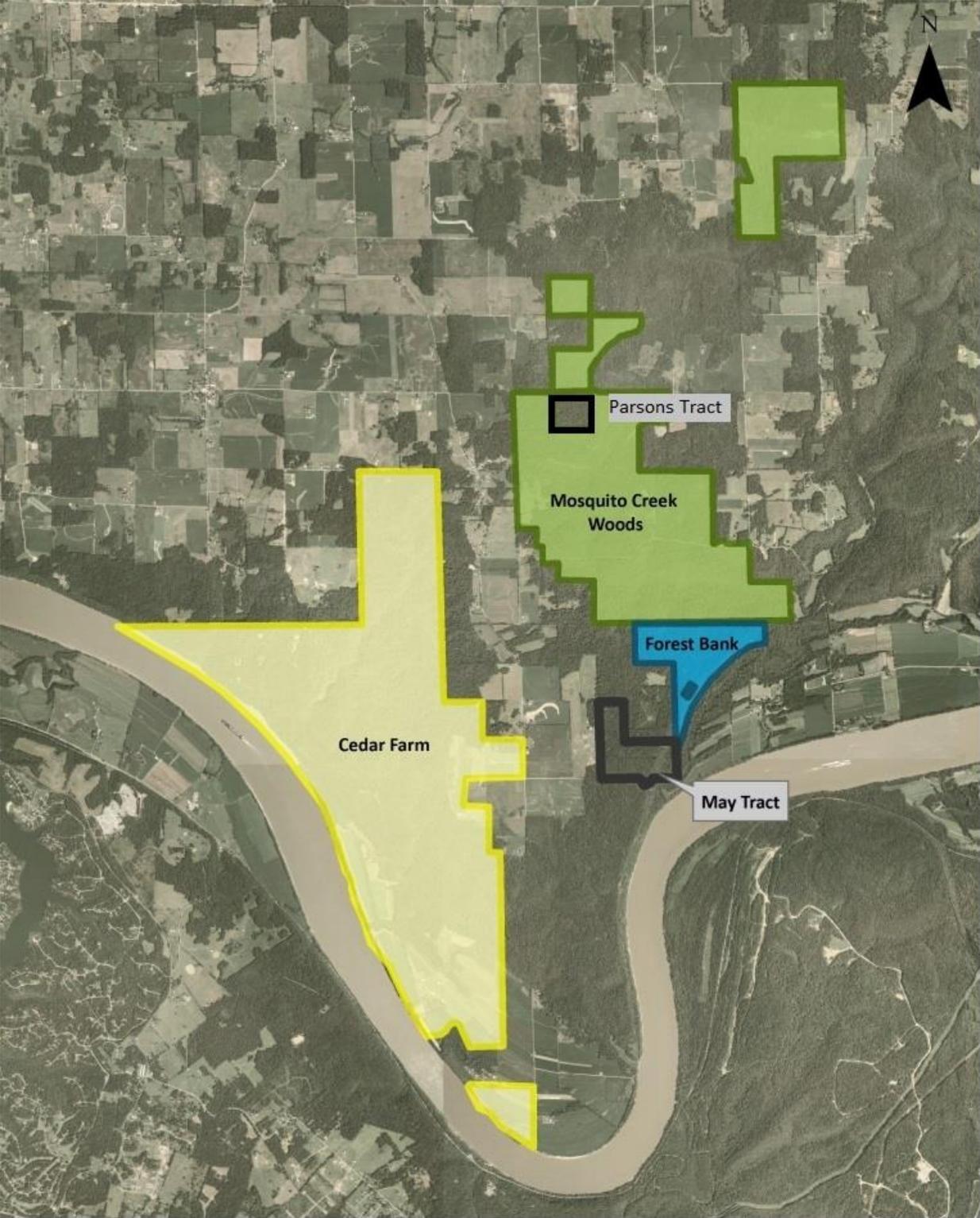
Merry Ledges Hostess

Missi Bush-Sawtell, our hostess for our evening event, is the owner of Bush Enterprises, a long-haul trucking company in southern Indiana. She also owns a campground and a number of homes along the Ohio and Blue Rivers that she rents for vacation use. Her event center, Merry Ledges, is a popular wedding and meeting destination in the Corydon area.



Missi is an avid historic preservationist who has meticulously worked to restore a number of structures including a local grist mill, school house and hay press that is in-use at nearby O'Bannon Woods State Park. A graduate of Indiana University Southwest, Missi is chair of the board of the Indiana Natural Resources Foundation, the not-for-profit fundraising arm of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. She also serves on the Indiana Blue River Commission and on the board of the Indiana Historical Society. A longtime lover of Corvettes, Missi shared that she has owned somewhere near 30 Corvettes in her lifetime (though sadly not currently). She and her husband, Bob, the property manager for O'Bannon Woods State Park, are graciously opening their private river camp retreat just outside of Corydon for our use on Saturday evening.

The following page is an aerial photograph of Cedar Farm to give you a contextual image of the size of the property. Mosquito Creek Woods, and the other properties in green and blue are owned by The Nature Conservancy, the organization that employs Mary McConnell, who helped to plan this trip.



0 0.4 0.8 1.6 Miles